



NEWS RELEASE

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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VIRGINIA'S BARLEY AND WHEAT PRODUCERS EXPECT HIGHER YIELDS

Virginia's barley producers are expecting to harvest a record 88 bushels per acre in 2000, according to the Virginia Agricultural Statistics Service. Yield forecasts are based on crop conditions as of July 1. If realized this will mark the highest barley yield on record for the Commonwealth next to the current record of 84 bushels per acre harvested in 1995. This expected yield is well above the 82 bushels per acre in 1999. Total barley production is expected to be nearly 5.72 million bushels which is 16 percent higher than last year. Weather conditions have been ideal for barley this year.

The state's 2000 winter wheat forecast of 60 bushels per acre is the third highest on record. The current record high of 67 bushels per acre was harvested in 1997 and the second highest was harvested in 1995 at 64 bushels per acre. Virginia's wheat production is expected to total nearly 12.3 million bushels from 205,000 acres, this is 10 percent lower than last year's 13.7 million bushels.

FLUE CURED TOBACCO PRODUCTION DOWN 37 PERCENT IN 2000; PEACH PRODUCTION DOWN

Virginia's 2000 flue tobacco production is expected to total 39.95 million pounds, down 37 percent from 1999. The large decrease in production results from a quota reduction in 2000 and large carryover stocks. Acres harvested are estimated at 17,000 acres, resulting in a yield of 2,350 pounds per acre. This yield forecast is down 70 pounds per acre from last year's record high yield.

The season has been near ideal for the flue crop beginning with a warm, dry Spring which benefitted transplanting. Timely rains has provided ample moisture for good growth and development slightly ahead of schedule.

Virginia's 2000 peach crop is expected to total 10.0 million pounds. This production forecast is based on crop conditions as of July 1. If realized, this year's estimated production would be down significantly from last years production of 15.0 million pounds. Frost early in the season coupled with hail damage has caused peach production to be lower than last year.

U.S. WHEAT PRODUCTION DOWN 3 PERCENT FROM 1999

Winter wheat production is forecast at 1.59 billion bushels. This is down 2 percent from last month and down 7 percent from 1999. The U.S. yield is forecast at 44.9 bushels per acre, down 1.8 bushels from last month.

Hard Red Winter, at 887 million bushels, is down 6 percent from a month ago. White Winter is up for the second consecutive month and now totals 235 million bushels. Soft Red Winter is up 4 percent from the last forecast, at 467 million bushels.

Barley production for 2000 is forecast at 307 million bushels, up 9 percent from 1999. The first forecast for 2000 indicates producers expect to average 58.7 bushels per acre, a decrease of 0.5 bushel from last year. Area harvested, at 5.24 million acres, is 10 percent above the 4.76 million acres harvested in 1999, unchanged from the June Acreage Report. Even though expected yields are slightly lower in 2000, the increase in harvested acres has reversed the five-year trend of declining production.

U.S. FLUE-CURED TOBACCO PRODUCTION DOWN 9 PERCENT FROM 1999

U.S. all flue-cured tobacco production is forecast at 598.4 million pounds, down 9 percent from the 1999 crop and 26 percent below 1998. Yield per acre for flue-cured is forecast at 2,357 pounds, up 195 pounds from 1999 and 153 pounds above two years ago. Yields for all flue-cured types increased from last year in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina but declined in Florida and Virginia. The decline in production is due to a 16 percent decrease in acreage.

The July 2000 forecast of U.S. peach production is 2.67 billion pounds, up 6 percent from 1999 and 11 percent above two years ago. All peach producing States west of the Mississippi river, with the exception of Missouri, expect the same or increased peach production for 2000.

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